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TAGS: [IP](#) [IR](#) [PGOV](#)
SUBJECT: PRT MAYSAN: JAM PREPARING FOR CF STRIKES

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Greg D'Elia for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (U) This is a Maysan PRT reporting cable.

12. (S) Summary: PRT heard claims on January 7 that Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) is making active preparations to counter any possible Coalition Force (CF) operations in Maysan province. A young engineer, who accompanied the Maysan Director General (DG) for Education for a meeting on project proposals, alleged in a side-conversation that JAM was prepositioning weapons, laying IEDs, and setting up helicopter defenses. The engineer commented on a breakdown of rule of law in Maysan, citing the reluctance of traffic police to issue citations on Dijla Street, the location of the 12 December bombings. End Summary.

13. (S) In a private conversation on the margins of a meeting with the Maysan DG for education, the PRT Bilingual-Bicultural Advisor (BBA) asked about the security situation in Maysan and the prospects of the PRT visiting al-Amarah. Engineer Dyaa Hameen Abd al-Wahid, who accompanied the DG to meet with the PRT, claimed that it was common knowledge that JAM is preparing for a CF attack in the province. He said that they were waiting for a CF attack and preparing defenses along roads to defeat entering convoys. He reported that JAM expected that Blackwater elements would be a part of the entering force and noted that the Maysanis are strongly against such "al-Quwat al-Qadhera" or "Dirty Forces".

14. (S) Wahid indicated that active preparations are ongoing, including the procurement and pre-positioning of rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), mortars, improvised explosive devices (IEDs). He said that many people have been involved, including women, and that they expect a CF attack imminently. Wahid added that four-barreled "Doushka" anti-aircraft artillery guns have been brought in from the marshes to defend against helicopter assaults.

15. (S) On rule of law, Wahid observed that the government and the police do not control the city and are afraid to enforce even traffic infractions. As an example, he noted that Dijla Street is crowded again in the wake of the December 12 bombing. Drivers speed with impunity and the traffic police are afraid to blow their whistles and issue citations. He explained that the police fear retribution by offenders and their tribes, knowing in advance that the government and police will not protect them.

16. (S) Comment: This was our first meeting with this interlocutor and his statements on JAM preparations may have been intended to impress as much as inform. Nevertheless, his statements are consistent with other reporting and we believe that JAM is indeed skittish about a possible CF incursion. We also believe that given heavy media coverage of recent incidents Maysanis are deeply suspicious of private security companies. End Comment.
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